

**STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY**

**CALIFORNIA SEA OTTER FUND  
PROPOSAL SOLICITATION**



Grants Funded by the  
California Sea Otter Fund

**Applications due September 6, 2019**

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Exhibit 1: Acknowledgement of Terms and Conditions

Exhibit 2: Sample Grant Agreement

## I. Introduction

### A. State Coastal Conservancy's Sea Otter Recovery Program

The State Coastal Conservancy ("Conservancy") is a state agency, established in 1976, to work proactively with local communities to implement multi-benefit projects that protect and enhance coastal resources. The Conservancy works along the entire length of California's coast, within the watersheds of rivers and streams that extend inland from the coast, and throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

The California Sea Otter Fund is one of the state's voluntary tax check-off funds that allows taxpayers to voluntarily contribute additional money for use towards the recovery of California sea otter populations. Approximately 50% of the revenues are allocated to the Coastal Conservancy for "competitive grants and contracts to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for research, science, protection, projects, or programs related to the Federal Sea Otter Recovery Plan or improving the nearshore ocean ecosystem, including, but not limited to, program activities to reduce sea otter mortality, and for public outreach activities that encourage taxpayers to make contributions by voluntary checkoff on a tax return to the California Sea Otter Fund. The projects or programs may also address pathogens and water and wastewater treatment technologies."

Each year, the Conservancy solicits proposals for the annual appropriation from the fund. This year the Conservancy has approximately **\$165,000** available for projects that meeting the fund's objectives.

### B. Solicitation Schedule

The schedule for the California Sea Otter Fund solicitation is as follows:

Solicitation Released	July 9, 2019
Proposals due	September 6, 2019
Evaluation	September 6-October 4, 2019
Board Meeting	December 12, 2019
Grant Commencement	~ February 1, 2020

It is anticipated that the 2020 Sea Otter Recovery grants will be approved at the Coastal Conservancy's December 12, 2019 board meeting and that funding will become available by February 2020.

### C. Grant Application

Applicants should submit a grant application, including all sections, by 5 p.m., Friday, September 6, 2019. The Conservancy reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to review applications submitted after the deadline.

### D. Questions

Please contact Hilary Walecka at [hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov](mailto:hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov) or 510-286-7029 with questions regarding this solicitation.

## II. Solicitation Guidelines

### A. Solicitation Priorities

Coastal Conservancy grants funded by the California Sea Otter Fund can be used for a variety of activities related to sea otter recovery and improving the nearshore ecosystem. Conservancy priorities for the funding are as follows:

- Plan and implement projects to improve or expand sea otter habitat
- Reduce environmental stressors impacting sea otters
- Implement critical recovery actions of the Federal Sea Otter Recovery Plan
- Research focusing on ways to improve or expand sea otter habitat or reduce stressors

Matching funds are not required; however, leverage is one of the Conservancy's project evaluation criteria so the amount of matching funds will be considered in our proposal evaluation.

### B. Eligible Grantees

Eligible applicants for funding from the Conservancy are:

- Public agencies
- Any private, nonprofit organization that qualifies under Section 501(c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, and whose purposes are consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Division 21 of the Public Resources Code)
- Tribes that are either federally recognized or listed on the Native Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List.

### C. Grant Period

The eligible grant period is from February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2022. No extensions beyond this date will be possible.

### D. Conservancy Required Project Selection Criteria

The Conservancy has adopted [Project Selection Criteria](#), which set forth the evaluation criteria that the Conservancy uses for all of its grant programs. To be eligible for Conservancy funding, a project must address the Solicitation Priorities, above, and the Conservancy's required project selection criteria:

- **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes** (Division 21 of the Public Resources Code).
- **Consistency with purposes of the funding source** (the California Sea Otter Fund).
- **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies** (specific plans and policies and the specific goals or objectives within those plans and policies that would be furthered by the project).
- **Support from the public.**
- **Location** (must benefit coastal area, ocean resources, or the San Francisco Bay or Santa Ana River regions).
- **Need** (desired project or result will not occur without Conservancy participation).
- **Greater-than-local interest.**

- **Sea level rise vulnerability.** (Consistent with Executive Order S-13-08, for new projects located in areas vulnerable to future sea level rise, planning shall consider a range of sea level rise scenarios in order to assess project vulnerability and, to the extent feasible, reduce expected risks and increase resiliency to sea level rise.)

#### Additional Criteria

- Urgency
- Resolution of more than one issue
- Leverage
- Conflict resolution
- Innovation
- Readiness
- Cooperation

### E. Environmental Documents and Permits

The Conservancy is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Grant applicants should consider whether their proposed project will trigger the need for an environmental impact report or negative declaration or whether a CEQA exemption applies. How CEQA applies and the status of CEQA compliance should be addressed in the grant application.

## III. Grant Application Process and Timeline

### A. Project Solicitation Period

The Proposals Solicitation period for this round of funding will be from July 9 until September 6, 2019. Grant applications must be submitted during the solicitation period.

**Grant applications must be received by 5pm on September 6, 2019.**

### B. Grant Application

The grant application form and instructions for completing it are posted on the Conservancy's website here: <https://scc.ca.gov/files/2018/03/GRANT-APPLICATION.doc>. Completed applications should be emailed to [hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov](mailto:hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov). If you are unable to email your application, you may send the electronic files on a CD or other common electronic storage device. Mail the files to: Hilary Walecka, State Coastal Conservancy, 1515 Clay Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA 94612.

All information that you submit is subject to the unqualified and unconditional right of the Conservancy to use, reproduce, publish, or display, free of charge. Please indicate if crediting is requested for any of the photos and/or maps.

A complete application will consist of the following files/documents:

- ☐ [Grant Application](#) including:
  - Cover Page
  - Project Description
  - Budget and Schedule
  - Additional Information
  - Maps and Photos, as applicable
- ☐ Acknowledgement of Standard Terms and Conditions (Exhibit 1)
- ☐ For Nonprofit Organizations, please submit completed [Nonprofit Organization Pre-Award Questionnaire](#) and corporate bylaws indicating institutional purposes consistent the Conservancy's enabling legislation (Pub. Res. Code § 31000, et seq.)

The application requires the following information.

1. **Project Description** – Provide a clear, detailed description of the project proposed for Conservancy funding. The project description should include the following sections:
  - a. **Need for the project.** Describe the specific problems, issues, or unserved needs the project will address.
  - b. **Goals and objectives.** The goals and objectives should clearly define the expected outcomes and benefits of the project.
  - c. **Project Description.** A brief description of what the project will accomplish and the specific work that will be done.
  - d. **Site Description.** Describe the project site or area, including site characteristics that are tied to your project objectives (i.e.: for acquisition of habitat, describe current vegetation assemblages, condition of habitats, known wildlife migration corridors, etc.). When relevant, include ownership and management information.
  - e. **Specific Tasks.** Identify the specific tasks that will be undertaken and the work that will be accomplished for each task.
  - f. **Work Products.** List the specific work products or other deliverables that the project will result in.
  - g. **Measuring Success.** For projects involving restoration, construction or land acquisition, describe the plan for monitoring, evaluating and reporting project effectiveness, and implementing adaptive management strategies if necessary. Who will be responsible for funding and implementing ongoing management and monitoring?
2. **Preliminary Budget and Schedule** – The preliminary budget and schedule must include a line item for every task identified in the project description. For each task, applicants should provide the estimated completion date, estimated total cost of the task, amount requested from the Conservancy, and amount that will be provided by other funding sources. The task list in the Preliminary Budget and Schedule must match the task list provided in the project description. Please indicate the source of matching funds included in the budget.
3. **Project Graphics:** Provide the following project graphics with your application. Project maps and design plans should be combined into one pdf file with a maximum size of 10MB. Project photos should be provided in jpg format. Project graphics may not be applicable to all proposals for California Sea Otter Fund grants; for instance, some research grants.

- **Regional Map** -- Clearly identify the project's location in relation to prominent area features and significant natural and recreational resources (e.g. regional trails and protected lands).
  - **Site-scale map** – Show the location of project elements in relation to natural and man-made features on-site or nearby. Key features discussed in project description should be shown.
  - **Design Plan** – Construction projects should include one or more design drawings or graphics indicating the intended site improvements.
  - **Site Photos** – One or more clear photos of the project site.
4. **Additional Information** – These questions are to help reviewers determine how well the application meets the Conservancy's evaluation criteria.

Applications should be emailed to the Conservancy ([hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov](mailto:hilary.walecka@scc.ca.gov)). If the combined size of all the files is greater than 15 MB, please send files in separate email messages (email messages over 15 MB in size will be rejected by our server).

## C. Grant Awards

Grants will be awarded once a project is approved by the Coastal Conservancy Board at a public meeting. Conservancy staff will determine which qualified applications to recommend to the Board for funding and the amount of funding to recommend. Staff recommendations will be based on the solicitation priorities (II.A., above), the total amount of California Sea Otter Fund funding available, the urgency of the project relative to other eligible projects, the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, and the application of the Conservancy's Required and Additional Project Selection Criteria.

It is anticipated that this year's California Sea Otter Fund grants will be considered at the Conservancy's December 12, 2019 meeting. Conservancy staff will prepare a report for the recommended grants. The staff report will describe the recommended projects and explain each is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation, the Conservancy Program Guidelines, the Conservancy's Strategic Plan and the evaluation criteria.

## D. Sample Grant Agreement

Once the Conservancy has approved a grant at a public meeting, Conservancy staff will prepare a grant agreement setting forth the terms and conditions of the grant. A sample grant agreement is provided in Exhibit 2. Entities that do not agree to these terms and conditions will not be awarded a California Sea Otter Fund grant. A signed acknowledgment of Grant Terms and Conditions (Exhibit 1) must be submitted with each application.

## E. Nonprofit Organization Pre-Award Questionnaire

All Conservancy grantees should expect to be audited by the State of California. It is the grantee's responsibility to maintain all necessary records to substantiate and document all payments made pursuant to a Conservancy grant. If a grantee cannot provide adequate records when they are audited, they may be required to repay grant funds. The Conservancy requires nonprofit grantees to submit the [Nonprofit Organization Pre-Award Questionnaire](#) to help flag any potential issues with accounting and record keeping before the grantee begins work. Technical assistance may be available to help grantees meet all of the state's accounting requirements.